

### **IN THE CLAIMS**

Please cancel claims 11-24 without prejudice.

#### Current Listing Of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A tool comprising:  
a base portion including a pattern to impress the pattern on a substrate; and  
~~an electroless~~ a nickel layer deposited over the base portion, wherein the nickel layer  
has a hardness greater than the hardness of the base portion.
2. (original) The tool of claim 1, wherein the base portion comprises nickel.
3. (currently amended) The tool of claim 1, wherein the ~~electroless~~ nickel layer  
comprises a composite layer.
4. (currently amended) The tool of claim 3, wherein the composite layer includes  
~~electroless~~ nickel and a reinforcement constituent chosen from the group consisting of silicon  
carbide, aluminum oxide, diamond particles, and polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE).
5. (currently amended) The tool of claim 1, wherein the ~~electroless~~ nickel layer has been  
annealed.
6. (original) The tool of claim 1, wherein the substrate is a package substrate.
7. (original) The tool of claim 1, wherein the base comprises a nickel alloy.

8. (original) The tool of claim 7, wherein the nickel alloy is chosen from the group consisting of a nickel-cobalt (Ni-Co) alloy, a nickel-manganese (Ni-Mn) alloy, and a nickel-iron (Ni-Fe) alloy.

9. (currently amended) The tool of claim 1, wherein the ~~electroless~~ nickel layer comprises ~~an electroless~~ a nickel-phosphorous layer.

10. (original) The tool of claim 1, wherein the pattern is to pattern an interconnect structure.

11- 24 (cancelled)

25. (currently amended) A microtool comprising:  
a base portion including a pattern to pattern interconnects in a dielectric layer on a package substrate; and  
an electroless a nickel layer deposited over the base portion, the electroless nickel layer to increase an overall hardness of the microtool beyond that of the base portion alone.

26. (original) The microtool of claim 25, wherein the electroless nickel layer is less than 10 microns thick.

27. (original) The microtool of claim 25, wherein the base portion comprises pure nickel.

28. (currently amended) ~~The microtool of claim 25~~ A microtool comprising:  
a base portion including a pattern to pattern interconnects in a dielectric layer on a  
package substrate; and  
an electroless a nickel layer deposited over the base portion, the electroless nickel  
layer to increase an overall hardness of the microtool, wherein the electroless nickel layer  
comprises a composite including a reinforcement constituent chosen from the group  
consisting of silicon carbide, diamond particles, aluminum oxide, and PTFE.
29. (new) A tool comprising:  
a base portion including a pattern to impress the pattern on a substrate; and  
a composite layer deposited over the base portion, wherein the composite layer  
includes electroless nickel and a reinforcement constituent chosen from the group consisting  
of silicon carbide, aluminum oxide, diamond particles, and polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE).
30. (new) A tool comprising:  
a base portion including a pattern to impress the pattern on a substrate; and  
an electroless nickel layer deposited over the base portion, wherein the base  
comprises a nickel alloy chosen from the group consisting of a nickel-cobalt (Ni-Co) alloy, a  
nickel-manganese (Ni-Mn) alloy, and a nickel-iron (Ni-Fe) alloy.